

[Mrs. Emma “Grandma” Mackey]

South Sioux (Personal narrative) [?] - 241 - DAK [750?] 3 carbon DUP

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER Edna B. Pearson ADDRESS 108 East 18th St. South Sioux City

DATE October 22, 1938 SUBJECT Interview No. 4

1. Name and address of Informant Mrs. Emma “Grandma” Mackey 209 East 11, South Sioux City
2. Date and time of interview October 18, 4:45 P M.
3. Place of interview 209 East 11, South Sioux City
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant Mrs. James F. Mackey, 403 First Ave. South Sioux City
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you No one
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Lives in small house at 209 East 11th Street, which she said she and her husband bought several years ago; her granddaughter, daughter of Mrs. James F. Mackey, and her husband, live with her; Grandma Mackey is very spry and active and has a keen mind and memory C15 - 2/27/41 - Nebraska

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Edna B Pearson ADDRESS 108 E 18 South Sioux

Library of Congress

DATE October 22, 1938 SUBJECT Interview No. 4

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. Emma Mackey 209 E 11 South Sioux

1. Ancestry
2. Place and date of birth Indiana, October 16, 1858
3. Family Six girls and six boys
4. Place lived in, with dates Indiana, Bancroft, Jackson, South Sioux but no dates given
5. Education, with dates What would be about an eighth grade education today, no date
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates Always a housewife
7. Special skills and interests; Interested in making a home and caring for her children and in being a good friend and neighbor
8. Community and religious activities; Member of Catholic church
9. Description of informant Mrs. Mackey is exceptionally spry and active for a woman her age. Has shrewd, but twinkling, blue eyes; a very heavy head of hair that is not very gray; she is not a large woman; is very pleasant to talk with, and her own words describe herself better than I can: "We always managed to get along some how."

FORM C

NAME OF WORKER Edna B Pearson ADDRESS 108 E. 18 So Sioux

DATE October 22, 1938 SUBJECT Interview No. 4

Library of Congress

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs James F. Emma Mackey [Mackey 209 E 11?] So Sioux

In 1885 we came from Indiana to Bancroft, Nebraska; lived there that winter on the reservation; spent the first winter in a dug-out in Bancroft and in the spring rented a house on the Omaha reservation; moved around; never owned a place; lived as much as eight years on one place, and then moved again. In 1909 moved to Jackson; rented until war times.

I never saw anything like the blizzard of 1888. We didn't have any cattle, but the man we rented of, who lived at Bancroft, had cattle, and my husband and a Swedish hired man took care of the cattle.

It was so nice that forenoon (December 12th) and the hired man said he was "so happy as a sunflower." The men went to the river [?] bottom for hay. All at once the wind came up from the northwest like a big black cloud and seemed to go right around the house, freezing the windows up with frost so thick you couldn't see through them any more than you could see through a board. The men could hardly find their way to the house; the hired man wanted to go with the wind and if they had they would have been frozen to death, but my husband knew the way and finally reached the house; he knew the windmill was between the barn and house. They had a basket of corn and the hired man pulled one way and my husband the other; couldnt see any more than you could see through a wall. It lasted about three days; it didn't snow so much but the air seemed full of snow on account of the high wind. Had a baby ten days old and had two other children. As it happened there was a big windbraks ont on the place and the cattle took shelter there. Some of

Pearson So Soo [?] the neighbors had lots of cattle that froze.

My husband's brother, George Mackey, lived about two miles from us. He got out of tobacco; he hunted around through the clothes looking for some as he thought his wife

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had used tobacco for storing clothes in the summer. He couldn't find any and started to a neighbor's house for some before the blizzard was over; his eyes and face were all frozen over before he got to the neighbor and got some tobacco. That was down near Bancroft.

In 1909 we moved to Jackson. We never owned a foot of ground until we sold all our machinery, horses, and everything, after the war, and came to South Sioux City. We raised five boys and five girls, and always got along some how.

The Indians never bothered; the Indians here were the first I had ever seen outside of shows in Indiana. The man we rented the place from near Bancroft was trading with the Indians but never said anything to me about it and the Indians rode up in front of the house and stood like stone images looking in to the house, but I wouldn't open the door, as I was afraid. Never had any trouble with them.

We came to Nebraska on the 23rd of September. My mother said it was cold in Nebraska and I wore my heavy clothing; it was so hot that I thought I would burn up.

When we lived in the dug-out, one morning I woke up but it was dark in the dug-out but I knew it must be late so got up. The

Pearson So Soo [?]

window and door were drifted over and it was as dark as night; it was 10 o'clock; had lots of snow and deep drifts that winter.

Rented another farm the next spring and in April it was so cold that the roof would crack and snap; it was so close to our heads it would pop, pop, and freeze.

Once in a while a neighbor would call for us and take us to a school entertainment.

I remember one night when we lived in the dug-out. A man had come past and had taken papa (her husband) to town in the day time. We had one child then, two years old. There

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was no door to the dug-out, just a quilt up to the door. Papa didn't come home, and didn't come home; the fire went out and I had no fuel. After a while he came and brought me a new dish pan. One of the men got out of the wagon and said "Weren't you afraid?" and I said "I Ain't afraid of the devil" and slammed the dish pan against the wall.

The wolves howled around on the hill sides and we were afraid of them as we didn't know whether they would come in our dug-out.

Most of the time we had good neighbors. They would stop and take us to town with them, and during threshing times the women would come and help me with the cooking and the men help papa thresh.

I was eighty years old last Sunday, October 16th, and quite a few people came in to see me.

Pearson So Soo [?]